

**Pakatan not targeting 'radical change' like Arab Spring, says Anwar
Malaysian Insider
April 15, 2013
By Boo Su-Lyn**

KUALA LUMPUR, April 15 — Pakatan Rakyat (PR) is not aiming to create "radical change" in Malaysia should it win Election 2013, but is pushing for good governance instead, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said today.

The opposition leader said PR would eliminate corruption by promoting the independence of institutions like the judiciary, the police and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC), besides making them answerable to Parliament.

"It's not about getting entire radical change to the existing system," Anwar said in an interview on US business channel CNBC this morning.

"What we require is good governance to strengthen institutions of democracy. So democratic transition is done through elections. So you can't compare this to turbulence in the Middle East and the Arab Spring," he added.

Former Inspector-General of Police Tan Sri Musa Hassan said last February that losers in the 13th general election would spark chaos like the uprisings in the Middle East to overthrow the government.

The Arab Spring revolution that swept across the Middle East and North Africa in 2011 toppled autocratic regimes in countries like Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen.

Anwar stressed that PR has shown good governance and economic success in states under its control like Penang and Selangor, since winning them in Election 2008.

"We are getting more successful. These five years, we have been familiarising with the government," he said.

Election 2013 is touted to be the tightest election race in history as PR strives to unseat the Barisan Nasional (BN) government that has been in power for over half a century since independence.

Anwar pointed out that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said nothing in response to Sarawak Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud's snub of the MACC on investigations of crooked land deals in the Borneo state.

"We have a chief minister who can officially, publicly denounce the anti-corruption commission, refuse to co-operate, and nothing is said," said Anwar.

The PKR de facto leader, however, stressed that a PR government would not go on a "witch-hunt" against those accused of corruption in the past as it would create instability.

"There cannot be retributive justice. We cannot continue to dig too much into the past because we have to govern," said Anwar.

"But we have given warning that excesses must stop. Funds stolen and absconded by the billions must be given back to the state," he added.

Anwar also noted a "groundswell of support" for PR in east Malaysia among the indigenous people enraged at BN over logging and land issues.

"This has been shown in the classic Global Witness video that is really shocking to many observers," said Anwar, referring to the recent video by international environmental group Global Witness that revealed land deals in Sarawak which would purportedly displace thousands of natives.

"Datuk Seri Najib has done virtually nothing to stop these excesses and plunder at the expense of the poor and marginalised," said the former deputy prime minister.

The Election 2008 "political tsunami", which swept five states in the peninsula away from the ruling coalition, missed Sabah and Sarawak that have been considered BN's "fixed deposit" states.

PR, however, has been striving to make inroads in the Borneo states in its quest to gain federal power.

Anwar also stressed that PR would continue the Iskandar Malaysia project in Johor, but pointed out that the participation of locals needed to be boosted.

The Malay Chamber of Commerce (DPMM) claimed last January that Johor Malays are currently Malaysia's poorest community because of Iskandar Malaysia.

DPMM has said that Putrajaya's land privatisation programme and massive land sales to foreigners under the project had triggered massive inflation in the southern state near Singapore.

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